

ARROWWOOD

VIBURNUM

Viburnum dentatum L. var.

dentatum

plant symbol = VIDED4

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Alternate Names

V. dentatum L. var. *dentatum* is a variation occurring within the *Viburnum dentatum* species.

Southern arrowwood, southern arrow-wood, roughish arrow-wood. (Arrowwood is frequently hyphenated: arrow-wood.) The common name refers to the Native American use of the straight young stems as arrow shafts.

Uses

Landscape: *V. dentatum* is an adaptable native, multi-stemmed shrub. Creamy white flowers, dark blue berries and colorful fall foliage make arrowwood viburnum an attractive landscape plant. *V. dentatum* suckers freely from the base. It can be used for borders or screens or as mass plantings and groupings to attract birds, which eat the fruit.

Medicinal: see Alternative Medicine Foundation: HerbMed (2000) for notes and internet links on medicinal use and other health related topics for *Viburnum* species.

Status

Please consult the PLANTS Web site and your State Department of Natural Resources for this plant's

current status (e.g. threatened or endangered species, state noxious status, and wetland indicator values).

Description

General: Honeysuckle family (Caprifoliaceae). *V. dentatum* are native shrubs growing 3-9 feet tall and spreading sometimes up to 8 feet. The plant's arching branches form an overall rounded crown; twigs are slender, ridged and angled. The leaves are deciduous, opposite, and simple, dark shiny green above and paler underneath, and between 1½ to 4 inches in length, with coarsely, but regularly, toothed margins. *V. dentatum* var. *dentatum* leaves are thin and ovate (egg-shaped), the under surfaces may be smooth or stellate (having hairs in small star-like tufts). Petioles are stellate. Foliage turns yellow to red or reddish-purple in late fall. Small white flowers are borne in 2 to 4-inch flat-topped clusters in May to early June. The ¼" berry-like drupes are bluish-black and attractive to wildlife. Fruiting occurs from August - November.

Variation within the species. Localized variations of southern arrowwood occur over the geographic range of the species. Most common differences between the variants are in the shape and size of leaves, the type and placement of pubescence (hairs) on the leaf underside and petioles, and the region of occurrence. Some variations of southern arrowwood include *V. dentatum* var. *dentatum*; *V. dentatum* var. *scabrellum* Torr. & Gray (= *V. scabrellum* (Torr. & Gray) Chapm.) and *V. dentatum* var. *venosum* (Britt.) Gleason.

Viburnum dentatum may be difficult to distinguish from another native viburnum, *V. recognitum* (smooth arrowwood), which differs in pubescence on twigs and leaves. Both viburnums range from Texas to New England, with *V. recognitum* more common in the north, while *V. dentatum* in the southern form.

Adaptation and Distribution

Southern arrowwood is found natively in open woods and margins, and along streambanks throughout the eastern United States. It prefers loamy, neutral to acid soil with ample moisture, but is adaptable to a range of conditions from dry to fairly wet soil. Plants are salt-tolerant in New England coastal areas. They can grow in generally drier conditions than *V. acerifolium*. They most commonly occur in partial shade but can be grown in full sun.

For a current distribution map, please consult the Plant Profile page for this species on the PLANTS Web site.

Establishment

Southern arrowwood plants are propagated by seed or vegetatively. Seed bearing age begins at approximately 3-4 years. Depending on region of collection, the seeds of *V. dentatum* may have a cold requirement for breaking embryo dormancy. Vegetative reproduction is through short rhizomes and sprouts from the root crown or softwood cuttings. Southern arrowwood has a fibrous root system and is easily transplanted.

Management

V. dentatum is free from serious problems of disease and most insect pests (see discussion on viburnum leaf beetle below). Occasional pruning is helpful to rejuvenate and shape the plant. Prune off basal suckers to restrict spreading if necessary.

Pests and Potential Problems

The viburnum leaf beetle (*Pyrrhalta viburni*) was introduced from Europe and Asia to North America around 1947. It became a problem in Canada in 1978 and has now moved to the northeastern United States where it is a concern in urban landscapes and nurseries. *Viburnum dentatum* leaves can be damaged or skeletonized by the beetle adults and larvae, though *Viburnum opulus* (European cranberrybush viburnum) appears to be the insect's preferred host and is most seriously affected. The beetle larvae hatch in early May, feed for about 4-5 weeks then pupate in the soil. Adults emerge by mid-July, feed, mate, and females lay over-wintering eggs in a straight line on viburnum twigs. When found, the eggs should be pruned out and destroyed before hatching. Chemical control is best applied to young larvae, which feed on both upper and lower leaf surfaces.

Cultivars, Improved, and Selected Materials (and area of origin)

Several cultivars of *V. dentatum* are available.

References

See the plant guide for this species to obtain a complete list of text references.

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For more information about this and other plants, please contact your local NRCS field office or Conservation District, and visit the PLANTS <<http://plants.usda.gov>> and Plant Materials Program Web sites <<http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov>>.

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